

A  
FOURTH LETTER  
FROM  
The FARMER,  
TO THE  
FREE and INDEPENDENT ELECTORS of  
the CITY of DUBLIN.

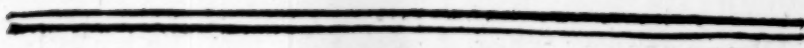
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A FOURTH  
LETTER  
FROM  
The FARMER, &c.

*My beloved Brethren,*

**A**LTHOUGH I have always had that Attachment to this Kingdom, by which every Man is bound to the especial Service of the Country, fromwhence he derived his Birth and Nourishment; though I further feel that *allowable Partiality* for this my native Soil, without which, few People have *Spirit* to proceed even to the Extent of their Duty: Yet those Regards, till very lately, have been general, and unmixed with the Consideration of any Place, or Sett of People, as distinguished, by a particular Interest or Claim, from the Rest of the Inhabitants of *Ireland*.

WHEREFORE,

WHEREFORE, when I was told that you complained of some Usurpations of Authority in your City, *I was One of the GALLIOS who cared for none of these things*; and I held it to be Matter of little Consequence to you, and of less to my Country in general, whether this Authority had been *duly*, or *unduly obtained*, provided it was *duly exerted*; whether You were governed by *These* or by *Those*, provided you were governed with Equity.

WHEN I was further informed, that *Two* of your fellow Citizens had attempted to excite you to a Resentment of these Encroachments; I looked on them as a Couple of turbulent Tribunes, who breathed more of Faction than Reformation; and I determined, to the best of my Ability, to oppose such a Spirit; and to vindicate those your Rulers, in their Assertion of the Authority they possessed.

FOR this purpose, I took some Pains to be acquainted with the particular Circumstances of your Case.

BUT when I clearly understood the Nature of *this Innovation*: That it was equally contrary to the *whole Tenor*, as to the *express Grants* of your CHARTERS. That *Aldermen* were no *inherent Part* of your original Constitution. That You yourselves had been the *primitive Parents* who begot them. That You had erected them merely as *collateral Props* to your Political Building. That they now presumed to say that they themselves were *your City* and the *Corner Stones* thereof. That they had *seized* on the Inheritance which they were called to *defend*. That they had *rejected* the very People by whom alone they were *chosen*; and that they claimed to be *self-elected* and *self-begot-*

*ten, Rulers* elected of *Rulers*, and *Aldermen* begotten of *Aldermen*: Then indeed my Advocation became mute, and Silence was the only Instance of Friendship they could expect, where Pleading had been absurd, and Vindication impossible.

SHORTLY after, when I heard, that *Those your two CHAMPIONS* had spirited you up to a public Demand, for the Repair of this Breach in your Constitution; and that they had actually undergone great Fatigues and Expence in their Endeavours to bring the Matter to an Issue in your favour: As I began to look on the Motive of their Labours, in a Light, very different from that in which it had formerly appeared; I own I most heartily wished Success to their Undertaking, in any Method that Law and good Government would admit: For as we have a wise Maxim in our Policy, that generously enjoins us, *to suffer a partial Injury rather than a public Inconvenience*, I would exhort you for ever to suspend the Redemption of your particular Rights, rather than to redress yourselves, by any Means that might embroil either the Peace, or the peaceful Disposition of your Country.

As I was not, at that time, engaged to you, by any personal Attachment, or singular Esteem; the Motive, that excited my Wishes in your Behalf, was general, it was wholly National, but it was also of the utmost Importance.

THE Constitution of these Kingdoms, my Countrymen, is free, in a Manner, and by Appointments, highly superior to any that *Rome* or *Greece* could ever boast. We ourselves sit in the *Senates* or *Parliaments* of these Nations by our Election of such Persons as we request to represent Us there;  
we

we choose to think with their Heads, to speak with their Voices, and therefore in them we dictate and institute those Laws whereby we ourselves desire to be governed. I can further alledge, that from these august Representatives of the whole People, down to the meanest Subject in either Realm, there is no Man who can legally be abridged of his Life, his Liberty, or his Property, but by the judgment of Peers, or Jurors, appointed by his own Consent; since he is intitled to a Negative upon every Person, against whom he can form any feasible Objection.

As I knew this to be the glorious and unprecedented Constitution of these Kingdoms in general, *where no Person is limited, save in his Capacity of Mischief, and where the Powers of the Legislature are so universally communicated, that each Person joins, by himself, or his Proxy, in the Appointment of those Ordinances to which he consents to submit*; and this I knew to be the Essence of PERFECT LIBERTY: I concluded, that all the *Incorporated Systems*, all the *lesser Institutions*, that were conceived within this great and GENERAL PARENT, bore the Image of their BENEFICENT MOTHER; and I am still persuaded, however they have *degenerated*, that they were *originally begotten and brought forth in HER Likeness*.

WHEREFORE, when I found, in so considerable a System as the *Incorporated Society of the Metropolis* of this Kingdom, that the People, for whose Benefit the Institution was formed, *had no share in the Disposition of Property granted for their Emolument, no Voice in the Ordinances framed for their Conduct, nor even a Negative in the Election of Rulers by whom they were to be governed*: It appeared to be an Offspring of so monstrous a Depravity, so wholly alien and opposite to our general Constitution; that I could not but

But look upon it, as *an iniquitous Encroachment on publick Liberty*; a kind of *mortified Spot in a Limb of the great Body Politic*; and how far the Infection might spread, how widely the Permission of such a Precedent might influence, was fearful to Reflection.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, indeed, that as I was no way interested in this Affair, further than an Individual, whose warm Wishes for the Publick extended to all the Branches thereof; I did not find myself disposed to a Mood, equally wrathful, with that of your *particular Patriots*; I found no Resentment arise within me against your *Lords*, whether *Mayors* or *Aldermen*.

THERE are some among *those Gentlemen* to whom I am personally engaged, as well by a voluntary Affection and Esteem, as by extraordinary Obligations, I saw that they were not the primitive Intruders; I saw that they came peaceably into the Possession of your Privileges; and I further considered, that the original Usurpation might have been effected, as much by the shameful Treachery or Remisness of your own Predecessors, as by the Invasion of Those who first availed themselves of your Possessions.

WHEN the present set of *Aldermen* were invested with Authority, they found you Strangers to your own Interests, they found you Blind to your own Rights. There is a certain Season assigned to some Creatures, before which, their Eyes will not open to the Light. If such was your Case, was it the Business of the *Aldermen* to hasten this Period?

IF I become seized of an Estate, whereof some of my Ancestors, without my Knowledge or Privity, had unjustly possessed themselves, If, thereafter, the right

right Owner should put in his Claim. I shall yet be accounted sufficiently honest, if according to all Custom, I withhold the Possession, till evicted by the very long Course and Judgment of the Law. If, however, upon Conviction of the Demandant's Right, I should voluntarily surrender the Possession; I imagine that this would be looked on as an Instance, of singular Justice. But no One will say that it was incumbent upon me to be over sedulous in the Search of another Proprietor, or inquisitive after Rights superior to my Own.

THERE are, my Brethren, two Kinds of *Guardianships* in our Law; the one of *Minority*, the other of *Ideotism*; the first *accountable*, the second *without Account*; the one, of Persons supposed *capable* of an Understanding to which they have not yet arrived; the other, of Persons supposed *incapable* of arriving to any Understanding at all.

Now, should a Minor attain the Years in which the Law admits him to the Intelligence of his own Interests, should he yet decline to intermeddle, should he shew no Sense of Property by any Challenge or Assertion: It will be Wisdom, as well as Policy, in his Guardian, to conclude that he hath a *Right* to continue to dispose of that Person with his Property, who thus demonstrates that he hath not *Reason* to dispose of himself; and should this Guardian happen to die during such Insensibility, that very *Ward* who was claimed by the *Ancestor* as a *Minor*, will be claimed by the *Heir* as a *Fool*.

Such was the very Case between you and the *Aldermen*. The present *Board* entered upon the Guardianship of your Persons, and the Disposition of your Properties, when some of you seemed to be of a full Age

Age, and most of you, in Appearance, were at the Years of Discretion. *You did not however claim the Election of your own Guardians. You never made a single Motion to call them to account.* The two specific Characteristics, the very Criteria of Idiotism. No doubt then but their Surprise was great, and their Alarm not inconsiderable, when after so long a Suspension of Intellects, so confirmed a Prescription against your common Sense of Things, you were suddenly roused from your Lethargy, and awakened to the Knowledge and Assertion of your Rights.

BUT, now, you will say, that you have a clear Understanding of those Rights, and a Capacity of those Properties. Now that all Eyes perceive that those are your Robes with which Aldermen are invested. Now that the Aldermen themselves deny nothing of your Privileges ——— saving the Restoration. Why do they yet retain, wherefore do they withhold them?

IN Truth, my Friends, I have, on this Occasion, run throughout History, I have searched among the Moderns, and ransacked the Antients, to find some Example wherewith I might reproach *these same Aldermen*, to find some Precedent of *Great Men*, who once seized of *undue Power*, have at any Time offered a voluntary Surrender thereof to the *Proprietors*.

ALAS! what an idle Journey, what a fruitless Disquisition. No Trace of such a Virtue can I discover, except in an old Romance of *Theseus*, and in the modern Instance of *Alderman Ross your present Lord-Mayor*, who is at once the highest Honour, and the highest Reproof to his Fraternity, who not only makes a Tender of every Article of your Claims with which he himself is invested, but hath also engaged to solli-

cit in Parliament the full Restoration and Establishment of all your ancient Privileges.

BUT, my dear Countrymen, do not consider this my Apology for your Aldermen, as an Approbation, in any measure, of their Conduct. If I shew you that there is no Necessity for flying into angry Passions, because Great Men behave—*like Great Men* ; this doth not declare, that Authority is a Sanction for Injustice, or that Precedents for *Wrong-doing* give a *Right* to similar Actions. No Mode, no Custom, can reverse the Nature of Things ; and whatever is intrinsically iniquitous will always continue so. *Truth* in every Case is like our *King*, or our *Church*, against which Lawyers say, *nullum Tempus occurrit*, there can be no Prescription ; and one of the *principal Maxims* whereon our Constitution is pillared, is this, *Quod ab initio non valet tractu temporis non convalescit* ; in plain English, *That which was originally against Reason, can never be made reasonable by length of Time*, alias, *Your Aldermen continue the same Iniquity in with-holding your Rights, that their Predecessors were guilty of in usurping them.*

I AM therefore no way inclined to dissuade you from attempting the Recovery of your *Privileges*, by all the Means in which you yourselves are *privileged*, to reclaim them ; by *Petitions, Addresses, Remonstrance, Solicitation, Suit*, by every Method that is consistent with that *right Reason* on which your Claim is founded, and which indeed ought to be the *principal Motive* of your Demand, that is, the *Well-being of Society*, the *Restoration of what is lopped from our Constitution*, the *Re-establishment of what is lapsed in our Country.*

The Session of our Parliament approaches. Such a *National Concern*, as I have proved yours to be, will come best before the Representatives of a *Nation* who are wholly interested in it ; and if you and your Countrymen have heretofore set any Value, even on those Privileges, of which no Man hath yet attempted to deprive you ; if you have been careful to return such Constituents for your Country, as were most knowing, and most zealous in the Welfare thereof ; your Concern will be their Concern, your Interest their Interest, in them you will give Ear to your own Pleading, in them you will judge your own Cause, and there is no Question but you will meet with ample Redress.

If, on the contrary, you have *betrayed your own Trust*, what Faith are you to expect from Those *who represent you* ? If you have elected your Constituents through *partial Motives*, is it among such you are to look for a *public Spirit* ? If you have been false to *your Country* in your Appointment of her Servants, the Measure you gave to Her will be meted out to Yourself. If you have thus iniquitously neglected the *great Body of your Privileges*, you will be equitably abridged of the *smaller Members* which you claim.

BUT Time yet serves. All is not lost, my Brethren. Much Power is still in your Hands. If you have a Sense of past *Detriment*, if you now feel the *Smart* of former *Woundings* ; let it warn you to your *approaching Defence*, let it instruct you to your *future Preservation*. Never look for a Restitution of what is *already pillaged*, if you are not resolute in your *Vindication* of what you yet retain.

You are once more permitted to a free Election of your Representatives; and the Objects of that Election will thereby be commissioned to assert your remaining Interests, and to reclaim your lapsed Rights. I will ask you then a simple Question, Whom do you intend to appoint for this great Purpose? is it the Men who already are *invested* with your Privileges, or is it the Men who already have laboured for their *Redemption*? is it those who have *plundered*, or those who would *restore*?

A LATE *Censor*, in a Treatise on the ensuing Election, hath told you, that "*Grandeur, Riches, or Honours, are no Disqualifications; that you are not confined in your Choice, with respect to Aldermen, Commoners, Merchants, Apothecaries, Brewers, &c. and that he is not against Aldermen, merely as Aldermen.*" But I have already told you, and again repeat it, that on this very critical and particular Occasion, *Grandeur, Riches, and Honours*, are such Disqualifications, as no Merit, no Capacity, no Integrity should reconcile to you; and that you have no way left to retrieve or attain a Character of that Virtue which you now profess, but by thus detaching yourselves from all Suspicion, all possible Imputation of Influence. Further. If I have not yet sufficiently explained myself on the Chapter of *Aldermen*, I now declare, that you are especially, you are indispensably precluded from glancing at *that Quarter*, and that, *I am peremptorily against Aldermen, merely as Aldermen.*

But, *Farmer*, you may say, whence this Prejudice and Aversion? what Objection have you so pointed and particular to Aldermen?

NONE other, I answer, than to my Friends, or to my Kindred, to Those I most affect, to Those I most esteem

esteem, should they sue for my Favour in the *Voice of Authority*; should they apply for my Preference, while they are *vested in my Rights*. My Exception to that *Board* is altogether *political*; it is not to their *private* but to their *public Merits*; I have nothing to object to them as *Men*, I have every thing to object as they are *Aldermen*.

ARE they not *Aldermen* who are unduly seized of *Part* of your Property, and is it with *Aldermen* that you would deposit the *Remainder* of what you hold? Are they not *Aldermen* who *refuse* a just surrender of your Privileges, and is it *Aldermen* whom you would appoint to *solicit* the Restitution?

IF I am in search of a Steward, whom I would have attached to my Interests and faithful to my Trusts; shall I fix on that very Man for the *Guardianship* of my Possessions, who already unjustly *withholds* from me a Portion of my Estate? If I have occasion for an Advocate to plead my Cause, shall I reject all others, to choose one from that Party against whom I propose to commence my Suit, shall I be sedulous and careful to select a Man engaged by his Interests to oppose or to betray me? Should I be so far a *Felo de se*, a *self Destroyer*, the Event would rest upon my own Head, and my Punishment would be as equitable, as it would be grievous and certain.

IT may possibly be retorted upon me, that the very Man, who hath engaged to solicit your Rights against *Aldermen*, in *Parliament*, is himself of the *Board*.

TRUE, my Brethren, a *Ross* may be an *Alderman*, but every *Alderman* is not a *Ross*, neither is *Ross* a *Candidate*, I should then have suspected the Sincerity  
of

of his Professions. But your *Aldermen Candidates* give you no Room to suspect their Sincerity; they have made you no Professions of such Surrender or Solicitation; and I am persuaded that they are Gentlemen of too much Honour and Ingenuity, to give you a Colour for flattering yourselves with the Hopes of a Conduct, so opposite to their Interests, so wholly contrary to their Intentions.

A CANDIDATE was so called, from the *Whiteness* of that Robe, which every *Roman* was obliged to assume, who stood for a public Office. It was an *emblematical Promise* of that *Integrity* and *Purity*, with which he engaged to be invested during the Trust.--- But what *Robe*, O ye Citizens, is *this*, in which your *Candidates* demand your Confidence, and stand up for your Employments? Even the *Garment of your Properties*, and *the Investiture of your Rights*. They address you for *Honours*, while they are crimsoned in your *Injuries*. They apply for fresh *Favours*, while they are laden with your *Spoils*.

THAT Man, who votes for *such*, puts a new *Link* to his own *Chains*, a new *Rivet* to his own *Fetters*. He declares himself an *Abettor* of the *Wrong*, a *Confederate* in the *Pillage* of his Country; and wherefore, if not in Prospect of sharing the *Plunder*.

IN the Account which *Virgil* gives us of *Æneas*, the great Ancestor and Founder of the *Roman State*, when *Turnus* sued to that *Hero* for his Life; *Æneas* was greatly moved in favour of the Suppliant, till he observed him *invested with the Spoils of his Friend*.

The Lines are these,

——— Stetit acer in armis  
 Æneas, volvens oculos, dextramque repressit,  
 Et jam jamque magis cunctantem flectere sermo  
 Cœperit, infelix humero cum apparuit alto  
 Balteus, & notis fulserunt cingula bullis  
 Pallantis pueri : victum quem vulnere Turnus  
 Straverat, atque humeris inimicum insigne gerebat.  
 Ille oculis postquam sævi monumenta doloris,  
 Exuviasque hausit : furiis accensus, & ira  
 Terribilis : Tunc hinc spoliis indute meorum,  
 Eripiare mihi ? Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas  
 Immolat, & pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.  
 Hoc dicens, ferrum adverso sub pectore condit  
 Fervidus.———

Which I thus take the Liberty to translate.

*Stetit acer in armis Æneas, volvens oculos, dextramque repressit.* The free Citizens of *Dublin* stood resolute and armed against all Kinds of Influence, they cast their Eyes on the *Aldermen Candidates*, and for a while were suspended in their Choice.———*Et jam jamque magis cunctantem flectere sermo cœperit.* And now more and more the good Services of the one when Lord Mayor, and the known Loyalty which the other inherited from his Ancestors, began to incline them in their Favour.———*Infelix humero cum apparuit alto Balteus, et notis fulserunt cingula bullis Pallantis pueri.* When lo, the ravished Garb of unhappy *Liberty* shone eminent and distinguished on their Shoulders.———*Victum quem vulnere Turnus straverat, atque humeris inimicum insigne gerebat.*  
 Whom

Whom the Predecessors of these Men had overthrown in a former Combat, and whose Spoil they had delivered down to be worn by their Posterity. — *Ille oculis postquam sævi monumenta doloris exuviasque hausit, furus accensus, et ira terribilis.* The Citizens, when they beheld this cruel Memorial of their pillaged Possessions and their desolated Privileges, were kindled into Resentment, and grew formidable in their Anger. — *Tunc hinc Spolius indute meorum eripiare mibi?* Shall you, they cry'd, exult in Trophies torn from our Ancestors, and in the Enjoyment of Rights that should descend to our Children? *Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas immolat, et pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.* Our City gives you this Chastisement, our Country sends you this Disgrace, and by us inflicts the Punishment that is due to your Depredations. — *Hoc dicens ferrum adverso sub pectore condit fervidus.* So saying, they lifted up their Voice in their Integrity, and pierced those Aldermen to the Soul with the Dishonour of a Repulse.

*The End of the* **FOURTH LETTER.**